

## RCIA VICTORIAN STATE CONFERENCE “A JOURNEY IN FAITH “

On Saturday, September 12, representatives from each Diocese of the state of Victoria gathered at St Patrick’s Parish in Pakenham for the biannual RCIA State Conference. The title of the conference was ‘RCIA - A Journey in Faith’, which was hosted by the Diocese of Sale and all participants were warmly welcomed with light refreshments on their arrival.

The Conference commenced with a formal welcome at which an apology from Bishop Pat O’ Regan was tendered together with his best wishes and blessings for the success of the Conference. We then moved to St Patrick’s Church for a very moving morning liturgy.



L-R: Simone Mason, Chris Mason, Dr Susan Crowe, Kay Curran and Joan Bowman

The keynote address ‘The Joy of the Journey’ was delivered by Fr Frank O’Loughlin and presented an overview of the process of conversion from the introduction of the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults in 1972. This was a response to a new situation which had emerged after the Second Vatican Council and where in the past becoming Christian was by osmosis – the society responsible for evangelising. In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and the early 21<sup>st</sup> century new thinking and action was required in a pluralist and secular society. As the process evolved it has become a prophetic model for the whole life of the Church and a means of dialogue with our culture. Fr Frank outlined the stages of the process and excellently set the stage for the concurrent workshops which unpacked the important components of the initiation journey.

The workshops gave the opportunity for participants to choose two areas of interest from the following - Triduum – Enlightenment and Purification presented by Rev Dr Elio Capra sdb; Mystagogia: Br Patrick Cronin cfc; Prayer: Rev. Deacon Mark Kelly; Singing the Rites: Mrs Sophy Morley and Getting Started addressed by Mrs Joan Robertson. Each presentation gave valuable insights and ideas to take back to parishes.

At the final session Fr Elio Capra sdb and Sophy Morley outlined the Sale Diocese initiative of Christian Initiation for young people geared at secondary school age students. This model presented the Rites somewhat simplified for adolescents.

The day concluded with a reflective closing prayer and all travelled home enlightened by the experience and inspired to bring new enthusiasm and joy to the RCIA journey in their Parishes.

*Kay Curran*